

in the county where the school is located is identified and is provided with the information, if that is necessary.

The local sheriff's department then works with local law enforcement agencies to take appropriate action and follow up on tips phoned into the hotline.

Of course, one of the most important aspects of the hotline is getting the word out to everyone in our schools and communities. To this end, the Colorado Department of Education provides each school with posters and makes sure all students and parents are aware of the hotline. AT&T-Qwest provides the public service announcements to highlight the school safety hotline to students, and they do so through the cooperation of TCI cable.

On the hardware side, Qwest has provided the telephone service for the hotline, including the telephones, the phone service, and installation, and provides the maintenance. As of September 5, the Colorado school safety hotline has taken over 600 calls, including 80 that were in the nature of a threat.

Establishing hotlines will hopefully help prevent future tragedy, and are just one of the many actions we can take to help make our schools safer. This will not be a cure, but it is another tool for all of us to use. We all know that the roots of school violence lie much deeper, but we should do everything at our disposal to prevent individual acts from happening.

The Colorado school safety hotline has been a success, and we need to make sure that every school district in America knows they already have some of the resources they need to start their own hotline.

H.R. 5123, the School Safety Hotline Act of 2000, was devised to help States throughout the nation do just that. While I wholeheartedly advocate the public-private partnerships in developing the hotline, which has been extremely successful in my district, with the passage of this legislation, funding will not be an issue whether to take steps to help protect our schools and communities.

It is my hope that tools like the school safety hotline will help restore a sense of security to students, teachers, and their families who undertake this learning mission each day. Once again, I thank the Speaker and the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. GOODLING) for moving this bill. I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 5123.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, today the House considers legislation that will direct the Secretary of Education to notify the States that Federal money is available to set up school safety hotlines so teachers, students, and parents will be able to report threats of school violence to law enforcement.

Many States already know these funds are available for school hotlines. Some House Members may question whether or not this legislation is really necessary.

As a member of the Committee on Education and the Workforce with my colleague, the gentleman from Colorado, I am committed to reducing classroom sizes, ensuring after-school programs, and increasing student achievement and test scores. We can accomplish none of these things unless we have safe schools first.

Had the 106th Congress really addressed school violence, then this legislation would be an appropriate amendment in major gun safety legislation. I regret that Congress has accomplished next to nothing to enact commonsense gun safety legislation.

Have we closed the gun show loophole that permits criminals to get guns easily? No. Have we required gun manufacturers to install safety locks on all new guns? No. Have we banned high-capacity ammunition clips on assault weapons? No. Do we even allow the Department of Education to collect specific information on gun violence in our schools? No.

In my home State of New York, I have worked closely with Governor George Pataki and our State lawmakers so we were able to enact strong, commonsense gun safety legislation this summer. I am proud our State now has a law that closes the gun show loophole and requires child safety locks on guns.

We need national commonsense gun legislation. This way we know all our schools will certainly be as safe as they can be.

The House leadership and the gun lobby have maintained their ironclad alliance to block the consideration of this commonsense gun legislation. I urge the American people to send a message to the House leadership to reject the gun lobby and enact real gun safety legislation before we adjourn for the year.

Mr. Speaker, the new school year has just begun. We need to give parents greater assurance that their children will be safe while they are attending school. I will support H.R. 5123, but the truth is, the Congress must do more. We can close the gun show loophole. We can require child safety locks. We can ban high-capacity ammunition clips. We can collect information on gun violence in our schools.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PASCRELL).

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding time to me on this important issue, and I commend her for her continued fight on this most critical problem.

We all remember with horror the tragedy that occurred in April of 1999 at Littleton, Colorado. It left a country speechless, parents childless, and Congress clueless. We will likely never know the motivations behind these two young killers.

One fact remains glaringly clear, Mr. Speaker: They were able to obtain the firearms they needed without any questions asked. A friend of the two purchased the guns from a gun show the previous autumn. Days after the killing she said, "I wish it had been more difficult. I wouldn't have helped them buy the guns if I had faced a background check."

In the days, months, and now a year following Columbine, I have joined my colleagues in the Congress from both sides of the aisle to put an end to the gun show loophole. While successful to that end, the majority leadership still refuses to address other proposed legislation dealing with gun safety issues, so I am pleased and I am honored to stand with the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. TANCREDO) and his legislation. It is on the suspension calendar today, and I salute the gentleman from Colorado. It is timely, in fact, because millions of children and teenagers are returning to classrooms across the Nation to go back to school this month.

As stated in H.R. 5123, an estimated 225,000 violent incidents occurred in 1999 on school property, at an official school function, or while traveling to and from school. That is not acceptable and it should not be to anybody, regardless of which side of the aisle they sit on. Students and teachers ought not to leave their houses in the morning worried about whether or not they will make it home that evening.

H.R. 5123 adds one more safety measure to ensuring that school violence is stopped. To those who say there are enough laws on the books already, I say, they are misinformed. It requires the Secretary of Education to notify States that administrative funds may be used to establish the tollfree hotline in schools, as the good gentleman from Colorado pointed out. Parents, students, and school personnel wanting to report suspicious or violent acts could use this hotline.

I applaud the author of this commonsense legislation. It does not take one gun away from one person in the United States of America. It is common sense, and I applaud the gentleman for that. This is a step in the right direction.

I am encouraged that we are debating this today, because it gives me hope. Remember the song, *Core Ingrata*. Give me the slightest sign of hope. That is what they are doing today. This measure requires, as a measure that I had introduced not too long ago concerning smart guns, that every handgun manufactured and sold in America must incorporate technology to allow operation only by its owner. What in God's name is so demonic about that?

I urge the majority leadership to consider bringing up reasonable gun legislation: a 3-day waiting period for gun show purchases, the elimination of high-capacity ammunition clips, and requiring child safety locks on every handgun. We have Federal law on aspirins, child seats, cigarette lighters. We are afraid to do it with weapons.